

CALIFORNIA FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
TASK FORCE ON THE POLITICAL REFORM ACT
MINUTES OF MEETING
September 27, 2010

The Task Force meeting, held jointly by teleconference in Sacramento and Los Angeles, was called to order by Fair Political Practices Commission Chairman Dan Schnur at 1:00 P.M.

Chairman Schnur asked that the members present from the Sacramento group introduce themselves. He also stated that he was an observer, and that this meeting would be conducted by Chuck Bell and Bob Stern. The following Task Force members were present: Jeannine English, Fred Keeley, Steven Lucas, Joe Rodota, Dorothy Rothrock, LeeAnn Pelham, Richard Schlackman, Trish Mayer, Lynda Cassady, Tina Bass, Gary Winuk, Galena West, Dixie Howard, Hyla Wagner, Scott Hallabrin, and Emelyn Rodriguez.

Present at the Los Angeles location were Task Force members Bob Stern, John Marelius, Jeff Marston, Luisa Menchaca and Janis Hirohama.

Members of the public were present at both meeting locations, including a group of high school students observing at the Sacramento location.

1. Public Comment. This portion of the meeting is reserved for comment on items not on the agenda. Under the Bagley-Keene Act, members cannot act on items raised during public comment, but may respond briefly to statements made or questions posed or request clarification.

Moved to end of meeting.

2. Co-Chairmen's overview

Bob Stern asked for comments from the public and also stated that Deanna Reader, a member of the public attending the meeting in the Los Angeles location, desired to make a comment at the end of the meeting.

Chuck Bell thanked people for all the good suggestions. He stated that a list should be compiled of suggestions submitted by not discussed at the meeting so they could be reviewed by the Co-Chairs.

Chairman Schnur stated that the FPPC should appoint another task force group to follow this task force.

3. Discussion of provisions within the Political Reform Act to focus reform efforts.

Discussion began regarding assigning two Task Force members each to various subject matter areas under the Political Reform Act and having them submit recommendations on their specific subject matter area.

Task Force members were reminded that they cannot discuss items with more than 10 other Task Force members either at a conference or by individual contact. If they do,

this may violate the state open meetings law.

Chairman Schnur stated that an email should be sent to the Task Force members regarding the rules for the open meetings issue.

The following topics were brought up for discussion:

1. Electronic Filing of Campaign Reports:

Chairman Schnur stated that the Secretary of State, Debra Bowen, would like to see changes in the electronic filing policy.

Bob Stern asked where the resources would come from for the Secretary of State's office to update its electronic filing system. It was suggested that representatives from the Task Force meet with representatives of the Secretary of State to find out what they can do and what the Secretary of State's office should do, and that this information be reported at the November Task Force meeting.

2. Filing Deadlines:

There was discussion about obtaining information on the campaign filing deadlines for local elections and on how many local elections take place.

3. Simplify Forms and Reports:

Bob Stern brought up the subject of data-driven reporting.

Questions arose on the issue of Task Force members discussing these issues among themselves outside of formal Task Force meetings and Scott Hallabrin cautioned the members that the open meetings law cautioned them to avoid a meeting of the minds on topics.

Chuck Bell requested that all materials be sent to Bob Stern and himself before posting on the web site.

4. Campaign Finance Thresholds:

Bob Stern suggested distinguishing major donors from the other types of committees.

5. Contributor Thresholds:

Rich Schlackman suggested that there should be limits on raising contributions.

6. Committee Termination Requirements:

Gary Winuk suggested that the FPPC should be allowed to terminate committees.

7. Classification of Committee Types:

Chuck Bell suggested that the reason for having primarily formed and general purpose committees should be examined.

8. Disclaimers for advertisement particularly robo-calls:

Bob Stern asked whether the Task Force should require disclaimers on robo-calls.

Gary Winuk stated that there have been a number of complaints about robo-calls. One thing to consider would be a record-keeping of robo-calls by phone calls.

Scott Hallabrin expressed concerns about disclosure requirements on campaign advertisements and suggested finding a way to make the disclosure information shorter.

9. Slate Mail:

It was recommended that the Task Force examine issues on slate email.

10. Consistency of Local and State Campaign Filing Requirements

LeeAnn Pelham had several suggestions on this issue.

11. Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure Thresholds:

The Task Force discussed areas and issues that might be considered on the issue of conflict-of-interest disclosure.

12. Revolving Door:

Joe Rodota stated that the Task Force should narrow its focus to eliminate items 12 and 13.

13. "Issue Ad" Reports

14. Expenditure Reporting on Campaign Statements - California laws.

4. Announcement of future Task Force meeting dates and locations.

The future dates for the Task Force Meetings will be November 17 in both locations and December 14 – Sacramento only.

Jeannine English suggested that the Task Force might be able to use the AARP offices for a meeting place since they have video conferencing.

The Task Force Meeting for January has been tentatively set for January 13 from 1 to 3:00 PM.

The Co-Chairs asked if, at future meetings, there could be a packet available of what is going to be discussed.

Chairman Schnur and the Co-Chairs indicated that, for consideration of the subject areas discussed previously, one FPPC Task Force member would be paired with a non FPPC member to work on their topic.

Chairman Schnur indicated that a list of new categories will be sent to the members and that the members should choose three topics to work on. The Co-Chairs will then put together a list of recommendations for the broader Task Force to consider. He also reminded the members of the importance of sending in their three choices.

Public Comments:

Deanna Reader stated that Independent expenditures amount should be changed to \$50,000 rather than \$100,000.

She also stated that general purpose committees should have the same type of requirements.

Relative to robo-calling, interactive caller should disclose who they are working for and who pays them.

Relative to thresholds, simplify according to what type of election (i.e. local versus state).

Randy Bowl, President of the California City Clerks Association, commented on the following topics:

1. Electronic Filing – local candidates do not have internet access.
2. Filing deadlines
3. Simplifying report
4. Termination of committees should be required at the local level also.
5. Expenditure reporting should be combined with the issue of form simplification.

Kim Alexander, California Voters Association, asked if the Secretary of State is interested in modernizing the electronic filing procedures. Will the comments be on the web site?

5. Concluding remarks.

Check Bell thanked the members of the Task Force for their participation and encouraged them to submit their choices.

The meeting adjourned.